

**Statement of Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-MA)**  
**Press Conference on North Korea**  
**Thursday, October 17, 2002**

I am pleased to join today with my friend and a longtime champion on this issue, Chris Cox of California, to urge the Bush administration to cancel the pending transfer of nuclear technology to North Korea in light of its admission of a successful nuclear weapons program.

Press reports today show that North Korea, after being confronted by U.S. intelligence information, finally admitted that it has been conducting a major clandestine nuclear weapons development program for the last several years, in violation of the 1994 Agreed Framework and its commitments under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. North Korea also admitted to having "developed other, more powerful weapons".

The 1994 Agreed Framework stated that the United States would assist North Korea in replacing graphite-moderated reactors and related facilities with light-water reactor power plants. Part of this agreement required North Korea to comply with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and dismantle its nuclear weapons program. As an additional part of this agreement, the United States agreed to supply North Korea with fuel oil for heating and electricity production until the new light-water reactor power plants came on line.

These reports confirm the fears we have conveyed to both the Clinton and Bush Administrations on many occasions and as recently as May of this year, namely, that the Agreed Framework is untenable and does not prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction. In addition, we have repeatedly urged the administration to reconsider plans to proceed with the transfer of two light water nuclear reactors to North Korea in light of Pyongyang's ongoing efforts to acquire a nuclear weapons capability.

We believe that, in light of North Korea's acknowledgement that it has been violating the Agreed Framework for the last several years, and that it has now nullified the commitments made in that Framework, and that it is in violation of its commitments under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, that it is time for the United States to acknowledge that the Agreed Framework is dead. Instead, the U.S. should immediately halt all construction of these reactors, cease all nuclear cooperation with North Korea, and call upon South Korea and Japan to do the same.

In addition, We believe the U.S. should no longer provide fuel oil or other economic aid, other than food or medical supplies to North Korea. We should move to block any such assistance by international lending institutions or other governments, until such time as North Korea agrees to end its nuclear weapons program and accept international inspectors to conduct on-demand, any-where, any-time inspections.

Finally, we believe the Bush Administration needs to take the lead in assuring the international community responds strongly to the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons programs. We are strongly urging the President to request action by the United Nation's Security Council to condemn North Korea for violating its nuclear non-proliferation commitments and to provide for an appropriate response. In addition, we are urging the Administration to consult with our South Korean and Japanese allies to encourage them to convey to North Korea the serious and dire consequences of its actions.

The North Korean nuclear threat is just as serious as the threat posed by Iraq. We are joining on a bipartisan basis to urge President Bush to make a strong and vigorous response. Instead of assisting the North Koreans in their pursuit of weapons of mass destruction, we take vigorous action now to get them to dismantle such weapons.